



City of Palo Alto Staff Report to Public Art Commission

September 19, 2023

RE: Agenda Item 5

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Public Art Commission accept the donation of artworks by Cubberley artists Tara de la Garza and Robin Mullery into the City collection.

Discussion:

These generous gifts are being offered by the CASP artists as part of the Cubberley Artist Studio Program (CASP) agreement. According to the CASP Guidelines, all CASP artists are expected to donate one of his/her artworks in their first (4-year) residency term to the City's Public Art Program. The donation is subject to the approval of the Public Art Commission and, upon acceptance, will be deemed a gift made under terms and conditions established by City.

Tara de la Garza:

Tara de la Garza is an Irish/Australian multidisciplinary media artist who studied Fine Art at Curtin University in Western Australia. She has been a resident CASP artist since 2018. De la Garza's work is in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Watson Library, NYC. She has exhibited throughout the US, including Mass MOCA, Chicago Art Institute, Cornell University, San Diego Art Institute, Palo Alto Art Center, Palace of Fine Arts SF and SF Design Week.

De la Garza's dynamic collage work features large format multimedia works assembled from various natural history images, creating a taxonomy of puzzling hybrid species. The artwork offered for donation, titled *Segmentum Collum Judleoni*, comes from her *Progeny Series*, a body of work she created between 2012-18. These works are De la Garza's meditations on nature and diversity that envision what it would be like if life on a planet was undisturbed by human interference, or even, indeed, the laws of nature. The result is a whimsical world of hybrid organisms, a library of awe-inspiring holistic hodgepodes pieced together from various natural history images. Likening the work to that of a scientist discovering a new species she names her

creatures based on a nomenclature of relationships, the Latin names attributed to important people in her life.

Image of Proposed Artwork:



Segmentum Collum Judleoni, 2018 by Tara de la Garza
Photographic collage on paper, 18 x 24 in., (frame 23 x 29 in.)

Robin Mullery:

Palo Alto based mixed media artist Robin Mullery infuses tenderness into the images, objects, and installations she creates. From her background as a therapist she uses her experience of vulnerability and healing to ask questions of and give shape to what it is to see and be seen. She draws a parallel between the urban/industrial landscape and the psychic/emotional state of its inhabitants. This surfaces, geomorphic or social, hidden depths and interconnected in ways not easily visible.

Inherent in Mullery's work is an exploration of underlying structures, cracks, and fissures in the coming together of matter. She explores the dichotomy of organic and geometric, the real and conceptual, masculine and feminine, harm and repair. Self-taught in visual art with an MFA in Poetry and an MA in Psychology Mullery is unrestricted by traditional modes of artistic expression, instead intuiting her way to form and shape. She is a Cubberley Artist in Residence through 2026.

The artwork offered for donation by Robin Mullery is titled *Softly, Filling Holes*. It explores the idea and action of harm and repair; how present action can touch past wounds in an effort to heal them. The two large chemical vats in the photo were part of the chemical fertilizer plant that operated for 50+ years, employed hundreds of families, and caused vast environmental damage to the land it was operating on and the waterways nearby. The cotton balls, a common supply used in physical healing, were placed in the chemical drum as a symbolic act of repair and healing and to bring attention to the need to consider how to heal wounds that cannot easily be repaired.

The artwork was juried into Feat to Fire, a show at the Sanchez Art Center in Jan/Feb 2020 organized by WEAD, the Women Eco Artist Dialogue, curated by Nanette Wylde. The image was taken in the derelict restricted area in the industrial park at CUF in Barreiro Portugal.

Image of Proposed Artwork (page below):



Softly, Filling Holes, 2020 by Robin Mullery

Digital photograph printed on aluminum, 45" x 30"

Tara de la Garza

Born Ireland, Citizen EU, Australia, USA, SF Bay Area and LA

Instagram @taradelagarza

www.taradelagarza.com

Tara de la Garza is an Irish/Australian artist and a US resident. She studied Fine Art at Curtin University in Western Australia and is currently in a resident studio program at Cubberley in Palo Alto, CA

Exhibitions

2022 Group Show, Silicon Valley Sculpture Fair, Menlo Park, CA
2022 Art Market SF, bG Gallery, Art Fair, San Francisco, CA
2022 3-person show 'At Stake', Spring/Break Los Angeles, CA
2022 Solo showcase 'Focus on Form' as part of Intersect Palm Springs, CA
2021 Context Art Miami, bG Gallery, Miami Art Fair, FL
2021 Group Show, Weave, Bundle, Cut and Layer, Root Division, SF
2021 Public Art Commission 'Social Distancing Stools' Rinconada Park, Palo Alto, CA
2021 Group Show, 'Dream State' Museum of Northern California (MONCA)
2021 Solo Show, Sequestered, Universally Unknown, Los Angeles, CA
2021 Group Show, Stripes, BG Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2021 Group Show, Art/World Australia, BG Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2020 Group Show, 'Art in the Time of Corona' NUMU, Los Gatos, CA
2020 Group Show, Silicon Valley Sculpture, CA
2020 Solo Show, Art Kiosk, Redwood City, CA
2020 Group Show, Doom and Bloom, West Windsor Arts Center, NJ
2019 Group Show, Palace of Fine Arts, SF, Message in a Bottle, Surfrider Foundation
2019 San Francisco Design Week, Design Hub installation, CA
2019 Group Show 'Spring Haiku', Flatfile Gallery, NYC
2018 Group Show, Paper Cuts: Large Scale Collage, Palo Alto Art Center, CA
2017 'Yellow Chair Extravaganza', DAVID&SCHWEITZER Contemporary NY
2017 Solo Show at The Lodge Gallery, NYC 'Unnatural Selection'
2017 San Diego Art Institute 'Diverge/Convene' Group show + workshop
2016 Solo projection '(; wink)' The Great Wall of Oakland, Oakland, CA
2016 Group Show 'Nothing is Here; Dada is its Name', Redwood City, CA
2015 Group Show 'New Paintings', Aggregate Space Gallery
2014 Solo Show at The Lodge Gallery, NYC 'Embracing Failure'

2013 2-person show 'Cinderscape', Aggregate Space Gallery, Oakland, CA

2012 Group Show, 'Dia de los Muertos', Arts Council of Princeton, NJ

2012 Collaboration with Amanda Browder, 'What Could You Do Here?' Chashama, NYC

2011 Group Show 'Town & Country' 320 Studios, NYC

2011 Group Show 'ArtJam', Homefront ArtSpace, Princeton NJ

2011 MASS MOCA 'An Exchange with Sol LeWitt' North Adams, Massachusetts

2011 Group Show 'Art for Soul' A Gallery, NYC

2011 Book Launch 'RIPE:conception and perception' Allegra LaViola Gallery NYC

2010 Fremantle Arts Festival 'Drawn Together' Moores Building of Contemporary Art, Australia

2010 2 Person show 'RIPE:conception and perception' Gallery Aferro, Newark, NJ

2010 Group Show 'Exquisite Salvage' incomplete. 210 Clinton St, NYC- 2ONETWO

2010 Group Show 'the possibility of a painting, Gallery Suite, Chelsea Hotel NYC

2009 Solo Show 'By the Light' 223 East Broadway, NYC

2009 Group Show 'No Longer Empty' storefronts at Chelsea Hotel, NYC

2009 Group Show 'Figment' Governor's Island NYC

2009 'good morning' intervention, streets of NYC

2009 Group Show 'World Of Imagination Vol.2', APW Gallery, NYC

2008 Open Studio, Performance "Life is too short NOT to stuff a mushroom" 121 Ludlow Collective, NYC

2008 Group Show, Umbrella Arts, NYC

2008 Solo Installation 'The Clubhouse' Agni Gallery residency, NYC

2008 Group Show 'Movement, Color and Light, Reflect Arts, NYC

2008 Group Show 'Dada Art Fair' Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

2007 please intervention, streets of NYC

2007 Artomat, art dispensing machine, Chicago Art Institute

2007 Group Show 'Mail/Art Global Collaborative Massive" ABC No Rio, NY

Press

2022 InMenlo <https://inmenlo.com/2022/09/22/sculpture-by-tara-de-la-garza-on-display-at-silicon-valley-sculpture-2022/>

2022 <https://untitled-magazine.com/highlights-from-spring-break-art-show-los-angeles-2022/>

2021 Palo Alto Weekly <https://paloaltoonline.com/news/2021/11/11/artup-open-studios-event-makes-an-impression-with-free-prints>

2021 InMenlo <https://inmenlo.com/2021/03/26/artist-tara-de-la-garza-hosts-gallery-opening-virtually-on-march-27/>

2020 Patch https://patch.com/california/redwoodcity-woodside/renowned-peninsula-artist-gives-voice-imperiled-marine-life?fbclid=IwAR2qRerTppsC4LTgaQN_9f9NUucmzdNzxXVdNCBdtmdgtfB4nfUADIfU9dA

2020 Palo Alto Weekly https://www.paloaltoonline.com/arts/2020/06/19/menlo-parks-tara-de-la-garza-makes-public-art-for-the-plastocene-era?fbclid=IwAR2qRerTppsC4LTgaQN_9f9NUucmzdNzxXVdNCBdtmdgtfB4nfUADIfU9dA

2019 In Menlo <https://inmenlo.com/2019/06/12/artist-tara-de-la-garza-creates-monuments-to-the-plastocene/>

2018 Kolaj magazine <http://kolajmagazine.com/>

2015 Climate Magazine 'Let's be Frank'

2013 NYC Art Scene, interview 'embracing failure'

2013 Art Nerd feature

2012 Comedy Central Tosh O 'chicken massage'

2011 L Magazine Benjamin Sutton 'incredible video projection'

2011 Cabinet Magazine 'Exhibition/An Exchange with Sol Lewitt'

2010 Art Hag 'The Possibility of a Painting, Chelsea Hotel' 'layered, moody, gritty subway pieces'

2009 Art Comments Don Porcella 'No Longer Empty' 'change our perception of language'

2009 The Wall Street Journal David Graham 'Making Lemonade' (printed on pg C6)

Curatorial Experience

2022 "Spring Break' NYC Art Fair (curator)

2022 "Spring Break' LA Art Fair (curator)

2020 "Spring Break' LA Art Fair (curator)

2019 'Silicon Valley Art Salon' featuring 3 SF artists (curator and host)

2018 'The Dinner Party' a series of salon events, inspired by Judy Chicago. SF

2015 'Hard Art is Sometimes Soft' The Frank, San Francisco Bay (curator)

2010 'Possibility of a Painting', Gallery Suite, Chelsea Hotel, NYC (curator)

2010 Kate Shaw, 2|ONE|TWO|PROJECTS, East Broadway, NYC (curator)

2009 Kenneth Park, 2|ONE|TWO|PROJECTS, East Broadway, NYC (curator)

2009 'No Longer Empty' RE:PURPOSE storefront at East Broadway, NYC (curator)

2009 'No Longer Empty' at the Invisible Dog, Brooklyn (associate curator)

2009 'No Longer Empty' storefront at Caledonia, NYC (associate curator)

2009 'No Longer Empty' storefronts at Chelsea Hotel, NYC (associate curator)

2009 Group Show 'Figment' Governor's Island NYC (curator)

2007 Group Show 'Mail/Art Global Collaborative Massive' ABC No Rio, NYC (curator)

Bibliography

2022 No Longer Empty, Building Art and Community in Unused Spaces, Manon Slome

2011 'An Exchange with Sol Lewitt' Cabinet Magazine, Mass MoCa

2011 'RIPE:conception and perception' Aferro Gallery (collection of Metropolitan Museum of Art, Watson Library)

2007 'Ides of March' ABC No Rio

Awards

PICA Print Award (Gold)

FTI Young Filmmaker of the Year (Australia)

Education

2010 BA Fine Art, Curtin University, Western Australia

Education

M.A. Counseling Psychology, Santa Clara University

M.F.A. Poetry, St. Mary's College of California, Quail Scholarship recipient, Brenda Hillman creative thesis advisor

B.A. Sociology, University of the Pacific

Public Art

- Pinwheeeeels!, community pinwheel making/reminiscing workshop for City of Palo Alto Aug 2022
- "Holding Space in Concrete", community workshop for City of Palo Alto Apr 2022
- "Bright Existence", City of Palo Alto ArtLift Microgrant Jun-Aug 2021
- "there was a hurt...", PADA, Barreiro, Portugal Jun 2019

Solo Shows

- "Topography: Mixed Media Works by Robin Mullery", Peninsula Museum of Art, Burlingame, CA, Curator DeWitt Cheng Feb/Mar 2019
- "Scenes Along the Fault Lines of Feeling", Branner Spangenberg Gallery, Redwood City, CA, Curator Michael Pauker Apr/May 2018

Group Shows

- "Handing Off: Art in Pandemic Times", Worth Ryder Gallery, UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA Apr-May 2021
- "Art of Healing", SIY Gallery, San Francisco, CA Apr-May 2021
- "Holding it Together", Palo Alto Art Center, Palo Alto, CA Nov-Dec 2021
- "Finding Beauty in an Imperfect World", virtual show on Kunstmatrix Jul-Aug 2020
- "Feat to Fire", Sanchez Art Gallery, Pacifica, CA Jan-Feb 2020
- "Ruin to Runes", Art Ark, San Jose, CA Sept-Oct 2019
Apr 2019

- "Allowance for Form", Guerrero Gallery, San Francisco, CA Jan/Feb 2019
- "Unity in Diversity", Works/San Jose, San Jose, CA October 2018
- "Human Subjects", Worth Ryder Gallery, UC Berkeley, Berkeley CA Jul/Aug 2018
- "Infinite Memes", Works/San Jose, San Jose, CA
- "Perseverance", Museum of Northern California Art, Chico, CA Jun/Jul 2018
- "What Makes an Enduring Image", Branner Spangenberg Gallery, Redwood City, CA Oct/Nov 2017
- "Found Object/Readymade" Branner Spangenberg Gallery, Redwood City, CA Jun/Jul 2017
- "Me & You & This Other Thing", Southern Exposure, San Francisco, CA Nov 2016
- "Summer Bacchanal" Branner Spangenberg Gallery, Redwood City, CA Aug/Sep 2016
- "DaDa!", Branner Spangenberg Gallery, Redwood City, CA Apr 2016

Residencies & Awards

- Arts Letters & Numbers, Averil Park, NY Upcoming July 2023
- The Earth of, online residency through Arts Letters and Numbers Jul 2020
- Clobberly Artist Studio Residency 2019-2026
- PADA Studios, Lisbon, Portugal Jun 2019
- Being Human, Palo Alto Art Center/Jill Miller, Palo Alto, CA Sep - Nov 2018
- Dorland Mountain Arts Colony, Temecula, CA Jun 2018
- Arts Letters & Numbers, Averill Park, NY Jun 2017
- Centrum, Port Townsend, WA May 2016
- 20th Anniversary Issue MARY Magazine Editors' Prize in Poetry Apr 2016